

Abstract

The diploma thesis "Athletes as heroes - construction and evolution of Czech olympic medalist image" deals with media construction of olympic Winter image and its following transformation into national hero myth. It approaches the topic from the perspective of semiotic analysis. It informs about the key concepts of semiotics and media studies like visual communication, sign, code, myth, social construction of reality, representation and stereotype. These concepts are consequently used as tools for the analysis of photos (their legends) and headlines in daily press.

The text shows on the case of six olympic winners (between years 1998 - 2008) how Czech daily press dealt and built individual stories a basic archetypes. In its first part it offers basic theoretical frame serving to understand the hero image as the social construct. Athlete with his win attracts new - medial constructed - identity. In the second part text tries to analyse media contents that deal with athletes images immediate after their olympic victory. It arrives to following conclusions: media have a tendency to produce the stories of victory, that are gender unequal and stereotyped. And finally, text show us individual images, their basic signs and confrontation, that signifies very similar narrative practices and zero progress in time.